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## **Governor Wants to Increase Frivolous Lawsuits and Increase Insurance Costs; Sikkema says ‘Absolutely Not’**

*Legislation to reverse Supreme Court ruling will not move in the Senate*

**Lansing** – Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema today said he is not interested in the governor’s offer to increase frivolous lawsuits and raise the cost of auto insurance in Michigan as some sort of bargaining chip for the minimum wage overtime bill.

“I am not willing to open the floodgates and let through a barrage of frivolous lawsuits that would once again jam the judicial docket and increase the cost of auto insurance rates for Michigan residents,” said Sikkema, R-Wyoming. “The governor has been saying jobs and the economy are her top agenda items. Now she’s willing to set that aside and focus on the agenda of the trial lawyers. If she wants people to believe her, she needs to do more than just talk about jobs.”

The governor told reporters this morning that one way to garner her support for House Bill 6213 would be for the Legislature to pass bills that would reverse the Michigan Supreme Court’s 2004 decision in *Kreiner v Fischer*. In that case, the court finally set a standard by which judges and juries determine “serious impairment of body function” and “general ability to lead a normal life.”

Prior to that decision, judges and juries were defining those phrases on their own, with wildly differing results. The impact was that lawyers were filing lawsuits continually, knowing that insurance companies were much more likely settle out of court than risk having a judge or jury use a loose interpretation of the law.

“The Kreiner decision finally brought stability to the courts and the auto insurance market. To reverse or undermine it in anyway is irresponsible and I am absolutely unwilling to let that happen,” Sikkema said.

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